

Main Contract

September has been very busy, HPR started the month working on replacing the damaged tailrace stonework, ensuring that new stonework is carefully chiselled to match the old.



Figure 1 work underway repairing the tailrace stonework

Work has started on the conversion of the threshing barn into the artisan bakery, with new floor joists being added as necessary to support the bakery office/storage area, and begin the work to reconnect the internal spaces that will form part of the bakery space. The floor for the public loos is also under construction, with lime mortar added to level the surface. Round the back of the mill the headrace wall that was falling apart is being carefully dismantled and re made, ready for the wooden platform to access the Spill-gate to be added, and the headrace itself has been repointed. They have also completed the re pointing in the tailrace and have begun work on replacing the section of tailrace wall that was removed to create access to a garage, probably around the 1930's.



Figure 2 checking the joist ends

The woodworm man came to spray the two upper floors of the mill, all of the wooden artefacts/machines that are to be kept for display, and the outer surfaces of the milling equipment. HPR have also been taking up more floorboards to check the condition of joist ends.



Figure 3 Wooden artefacts ready for woodworm treatment

The scaffolders have been back again and erected an internal scaffold in the barn enabling people to work on the roof trusses, and a “Birdcage” scaffold inside the drying kiln room to allow access to the kiln and the stonework inside it.

The millwrights returned, replacing the bearing blocks for the control gate, fitting the racks and testing the open and close mechanisms. They also checked the teeth in the spur gear, and identified a number of them for replacement due to damage and/or woodworm activity.



Figure 4 close up of the operating mechanism in the control gate

The archaeologist has also been working hard on site, and has discovered an extended wall underneath the bridge.



Figure 5 excavating a previously unseen extended wall below the bridge



Figure 6 rebuilding the end of the headrace wall ready to fit the wooden walkway

Karen and Beth

During September we held a Volunteer open day, getting people signed up to a range of activities including garden and grounds maintenance, recording oral histories, and future maintenance. We also participated in Heritage Open Days, offering guided tours and family activities. We have had visits from each of the classes in the local primary school, who have all come and had a tour to show them the different bits of the mill and let them know what we are going to do with it, and to see the work the builders have done so far.



Figure 7 local primary school children visiting the project

Beth has created a route for running health walks from the mill, and a successful trial was held with a few willing volunteers. The walk will be added to a national website, and as the walks will start and finish at the mill this will be another opportunity to increase visits and interest in the project. We have taken cuttings from the Large Fuchsia planted by the last millers wife, which we will distribute to various places to be taken care of (in case the large fuchsia doesn't survive being moved) until they can be planted in the mill garden on completion of the restoration project. We have also has a tour group round from Heron Mill, in south Cumbria, which underwent a similar restoration project five years ago.



Figure 8 taking cuttings from the fuschia, planted by the wife of the last miller on site.